

## President's Lunch



Joe Fennell, Vice President, Newbridge Chamber, Deirdre Coghlan-Murray, President, Newbridge Chamber and Enda Kenny T.D., Leader Fine Gael.

This packed event was the talk of Newbridge on 25th May 2006. For the inaugural event of its type President Deirdre Coghlan-Murray invited the **Leader of Fine Gael, Enda Kenny T.D.**, to come along and address the Chamber members. The Keadeen Hotel provided an excellent lunch, efficiently served to the assembled members, who then sat back as Mr. Kenny outlined his party's plans for next year's election. He set out the Fine Gael stall on all major current concerns and issues.

One of the areas he touched on was taxation, stating Fine Gael had no intention of increasing taxes. He went on to say "It's important that we should be a low tax economy. It's not the actual amount of tax you take that's important, it's how you use it, the priorities that you set and the demands and the targets that you set out to attain, in terms of the public interest and giving the best value for money." He also discussed his wish to see Ireland emerge as a more competitive nation.

Enda's wide-ranging speech was followed by a vocal 'Questions & Answers' session where individuals posed questions including if Fine Gael was in favour of retaining the stallion tax exemption. He assured the attendees that they were keen to do so.

After the lunch he headed down town where he met many business owners and customers all along Edward Street and inside Whitewater, until 5pm that evening. As he talked to people, one could see he was establishing the issues that are top of the agenda for those in Newbridge. He mentioned how important the infrastructure of the outer orbital road will be for the town to continue to capitalise on its recent growth spurt. Leaving Newbridge that evening with a warm word for everyone, it was obvious a gentleman had been to town.

We hope the success of the inaugural President's Lunch bodes well for many more years to follow!

## Business Breakfast "From the horse's mouth!"

This early event on Friday 21st April 2006 was held at Ross Morgans Restaurant. The guest speaker was **Brian Kavanagh, CEO of Horse Racing Ireland**. After a tasty breakfast, over which members and friends chatted about events of the day, Brian took the floor and gave a very interesting talk on the horse racing industry and its importance to Co. Kildare. A quarter of Ireland's trainers and 15% of all Irish stallions are based in Kildare.

Some other fascinating facts emerged, especially the importance of exporting our Irish thoroughbreds all over the world and the degree of success enjoyed by Irish breeders. Irish Thoroughbred Marketing, an offshoot of Horse Racing Ireland, takes care of promoting this aspect of the equine industry. Ireland is the third largest producer of horses in the world, with 42% of the overall total of thoroughbreds bred in the E.U.

Brian shared his excitement on the plans for Horse Racing Ireland's move to Ballymany. They hope this project will start later in 2006 and are looking forward to being in a state of the art building on the new site.

Horse Racing Ireland – formed in 2001 – is a semi-state body in the care of the Department of Arts, Sport & Tourism and one of its key roles is to manage Ireland's position in horse racing. Funded by duty from off-course betting, they have 120 full-time and 300 part-time staff. They also licence the bookies and own some of the 27 racecourses that Ireland boasts. Brian pointed out that horse racing here is not just a hobby or a sport, it's an industry! There are 165,000 direct and indirect jobs in horse racing in Ireland, with breeding worth €350 million per year, and a tax take of €40 million. About 70,000 tourists alone come here annually for horse racing.

Brian wrapped up with an inspired tip for *Brave Inca* at Punchestown the following week and wished the attendees well for the week ahead. Everyone left for their work with a much greater insight into Horse Racing Ireland and the industry in general.

## 'Member meets Member' - Whitewater Preview

On 21st March last, members of Newbridge Chamber had a **sneak preview** of the biggest retail news ever to hit Newbridge. Management of the **Whitewater Shopping Centre** kindly invited members to come along to see the inside of the new centre, ahead of its opening date of 6th April 2006.

The Chamber office was inundated with requests for the limited places. The evening began with an informal reception in the Whitewater Marketing Suite, where new Centre Manager **Steven Cleaver** introduced himself and a colleague from HOK. Everyone was 'booted and suited' – in other words donned the hard hats, yellow jackets and steel capped boots required by health & safety legislation, and then headed off towards Cutlery Road!

The two gentlemen brought everyone around the inside of the centre, pointing out the various elements including store positions, architectural features etc. Some members asked questions on their areas of interest. Everyone enjoyed the preview and agreed it was a 'Member meets Member' event with a difference.

Already we take it for granted that such a super amenity is on our doorstep.

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## Have you 'website presence'?

Newbridge Chamber's website can promote your business online. Simply send in a four line description of your business to [breda@newbridgechamber.ie](mailto:breda@newbridgechamber.ie) (or by post to the office at Canning Place, Newbridge). By having your company listed here it gives search engines another chance to pick up and list your business when being researched by a potential customer. Make sure your description includes the key words that someone would use to look up your products and services.

Visit [www.newbridgechamber.ie/membersprofiles.htm](http://www.newbridgechamber.ie/membersprofiles.htm) to see some existing profiles.

And don't forget if you would like to offer fellow members a discount if they support your business, then check out our Affinity Members' section on [www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm](http://www.newbridgechamber.ie/network.htm) and we will be delighted to publish your offer. Please use these services – they are currently FREE of CHARGE!

# Chamberchat

SUMMER 2006



## POSITIVES & PRESSURE POINTS FOR NEWBRIDGE

**A recent survey of Newbridge Chamber members shows a positive reaction on recently reduced road congestion. However, there's no room for complacency as many pressure points have been highlighted by members....**

### Summary of results:

**76%** of respondents agree that **traffic congestion** in Newbridge is now less than that experienced in early 2006, which is good news for those involved in the successful execution of the major road works last year and early this year. **12%** find the congestion worse in their personal experience. **12%** have no opinion.

Regarding **ease of parking**, just **27%** of respondents find it easy to get regular, reasonably priced parking on the streets of Newbridge. **12%** are not directly affected by this issue. By contrast, **61%** find difficulty in this area. Indeed many of these members took the opportunity to highlight parking issues about which they feel passionate. In particular, the problem of staff needing **all day parking** is obviously a real difficulty for businesses around town, many of whom raised this specific problem, although unprompted by the survey. Suggestions made include a call for more spaces in the town to be allowed for all-day use, a permit system to be introduced for workers and Station Road to allow more parking. The Town Hall/GAA car park is simply insufficient now to cope with all-day demand, members report.

The **traffic pressure points** are a subject close to the hearts of responding members, with almost as many different answers offered as there are members! Depending on the route taken to work or the position of one's business, we have been given a list of black spots and possible solutions by those driving them daily. The prevalent areas highlighted include:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Ballymany roundabout (at peak times)  | • Cutlery Rd./ Edward St. traffic lights        |
| • Dunnes Stores/ Tesco's traffic lights | • Station Rd./ Charlotte St./ Eyre St. junction |
| • Langton's Cross                       | • Main St./ Charlotte St. junction              |
| • Outside the Credit Union              | • Wyeth roundabout (at peak times).             |

Perhaps Kildare County Council's ambitious traffic lights synchronisation plan currently underway will cure all these ills – we will watch with interest over the next three months to see how its implementation affects matters on the ground.

## Bank of Ireland, Newbridge excels at National Excellence Awards

We're delighted to congratulate one of our very active members on their recent award winning performance! We like to be associated with success so 'well done' to Newbridge's Bank of Ireland Branch which won the three main Regional awards for South Leinster in the Bank's National Excellence Awards. This geographical division includes counties Kildare, Carlow, Wexford and Wicklow, so competition was tough. Their winning categories were **Customer Satisfaction**, **Wealth Management** and the overall **Commercial Branch of the Year**. Newbridge then went on to be nominated for all three awards nationally (the only branch to get three nominations) and subsequently they won the **National Wealth Management** award for 2005/06. No doubt manager Joe Fennell and his staff duly celebrated these achievements in style!



### FORTHCOMING DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>11 September 2006</b> | - Newbridge Chamber Golf Classic, Curragh Golf Club<br><i>Sponsored by Newbridge Silverware</i> |
| <b>16 September 2006</b> | - Special offer for Chamber Members at Curragh Races  |
| <b>October 2006</b>      | - Family Business Succession Planning, Keadeen Hotel<br><i>Sponsored by Baker Tilly O'Hare</i>  |

A full Activities & Events Calendar 2006 can be downloaded from [www.newbridgechamber.ie/events.htm](http://www.newbridgechamber.ie/events.htm)



"On the boardwalk..." Newbridge style

**Other burning issues** raised during the survey by respondents as needing attention include: policing of yellow boxes, noisy exhausts and litter.

Full results of the survey will be issued to Kildare County Council for their information and we will follow up with them to see what actions they intend taking on the many matters raised and helpful suggestions made by Newbridge Chamber members. Many thanks to all of you who took the time to reply and help us take this snap-shot of how you find matters today in Newbridge.

Kildare County Council has advised us that the **traffic lights** at the Dunnes Stores and Tesco junctions will be synchronised in the next few months. The timetable is:



- ◆ Currently installing the new Urban Traffic Control System, which includes CCTV cameras. This is the first time such a system will be installed in Ireland outside of the metropolitan areas. Work on the CCTV system is scheduled for completion by the **end of June**.
- ◆ The full system is planned for completion by the **end of August**. We are told this system will then offer integration and synchronisation of all the lights in town.

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## CHAMBER COMMENT

### Newbridge Chamber President speaks out on what's on her mind right now.

It's difficult to believe we are already half way through the year. My second term as President of Newbridge Chamber has so far been very busy and rewarding. One of our aims at the start of the year was to grow our membership and to get our members involved via our training, social and networking events. So far this year our membership has increased by 20% and we have delivered training to many members in Performance Management and People Management Skills.

In January we launched our new identity as Newbridge Chamber and had a very social members' evening kindly hosted by Whitewater Café/Bar. In February, we had our first Speed Networking event, sponsored by Clark Recruitment, which proved you can have great fun and do business at the same time. March brought our AGM where a new committee was elected to help achieve our aims for 2006/07. In April, Brian Kavanagh of Horse Racing Ireland spoke at our Business Breakfast. We launched Kildare's first ever Skillnets network in May which will be providing training locally, initially for the equine industry.

Our first Annual President's Lunch also took place in May with guest speaker Enda Kenny T.D., Leader of Fine Gael, sharing his vision for our country. We were delighted to have The Wine Buff host wine tasting evenings for our members in June. Getting members involved is an area about which we are passionate!

The next six months look like being every bit as eventful with, among other things, our Annual Golf Classic, sponsored by Newbridge Silverware, in September.

We are pleased to be working closer with our Town Council, Kildare County Council and acting as the link to bring you updates on issues which affect your business. There are challenges ahead – not least of all the construction of the outer ring road and the communications infrastructure in our town. We want to represent your views and concerns and need you to let us know where we can help.

Finally, we recognise the good that many businesses do within our community and encourage all to have corporate social responsibility – the rewards, whilst not always monetary, are significant and will have an impact on the morale and sense of achievement within your company.



**Deirdre Coghlan-Murray**

President Newbridge Chamber

## Passion for the World Around Us



Round 2 of **Vodafone's "Passion for the World Around Us"** community awards is now open for nominations. The aim of these awards is to acknowledge people who demonstrate a keen commitment to improving the world in which we live. The awards programme will honour those people who have made a positive difference to their community.

This round is different to Rounds 1 & 3 in that it focuses on the role **Businesses** play in making our community a better place to live. If you know a business which

- encourages and supports volunteering amongst employees

- has made efforts to encourage conservation of their local environment
- actively supports their community via corporate responsibility focused activity

then **you should nominate that company!** Call us at 438296 or email office@newbridgechamber.ie for a nomination form. The prize includes a specially commissioned award and a Vodafone store voucher.

The deadline for Round 2 is **June 30th**.

## Derby Day draws near

This year's **Budweiser Irish Derby Festival Festival**, which takes place from 30th June to 2nd July, kicks off at 6pm with Kildare Village as the new title sponsors of **Derby Friday**. The new Kildare Outlet Shopping Village, which opens this Summer, will support three races. Other races include the valuable **Woodpark** and **Ballysheehan Studs Stakes** and races supported by the Silken Thomas and N. Conlan & Sons. A packed programme of lively entertainment will feature Hector's "Big Bash" with special guest Hector O hEochagain, while live music from the exciting Glitter Bugs will be sponsored by the Hard Rock Café Dublin, as part of their 35th birthday celebrations.

**Audi Derby Saturday** is all about fillies and fashion with a high quality 7 race programme starting at 2.15pm featuring the **Group 1 Audi Pretty Polly Stakes** and **Group 3 At The Races Curragh Cup**; other races will be supported by Woodies DIY, Jordan Town and Country Estate Agents, Roadbridge, Netjets and ABB Ltd. The search for the style icons of horse racing will continue with the Kildare Village sponsored **"Fashions on the Turf" Ladies Day competition**.

To celebrate the 141st running of the **Budweiser Irish Derby on Sunday**, the Group 1 Classic will carry record prize money of €1.5 million. The Three Irish Tenors will be accompanied by Newbridge based soprano Lorraine Nolan, when they perform the "Curragh of Kildare" before the big race. The lady judged to have **"the Best Accessorised Outfit"** will win a prize worth €6,000 from exclusive leather goods manufacturer Chesneau. For those wanting a truly great party, the West End Marquee will be the place to be, with the Star on Sunday newspaper sponsoring entertainment from 12 noon. Time to get the big hat out!

**Diary Date!** We have a special Chamber-Curragh racing interest scheduled for **Saturday 16th September; we will be in touch with all members with details before then.**



2005 Finalists of "Fashions on the Turf"



Deaglan De Paor and Jimmy Sheridan of Newbridge Tidy Towns, receive their cheque from Deirdre Coghlan-Murray and Breda McHale, Newbridge Chamber.

## Newbridge in Bloom

Newbridge Chamber handed over €3,000 of its hard earned cash to Newbridge's Tidy Towns Committee last March to contribute towards Newbridge in Bloom 2006. We feel it is a worthy cause to support because the atmosphere created in the town with the vibrant colour display of flowers is simply hard to beat. The hard work done by Tidy Towns bears fruit every Summer when you see the difference the fresh displays of flowers make throughout the town. They give a wonderful welcome to all visitors and residents coming into Newbridge daily.

## Meet Newbridge Chamber Committee for 2006

The 2006 AGM held on 8th March elected the following members onto Committee for this year:

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Peter Byrne (C.E.O.)	Newbridge Chamber	Chamber of Commerce
Deirdre Coghlan-Murray (President)	Clark Recruitment	Recruitment
Joe Fennell (Vice-President)	Bank Of Ireland	Banking
Evan Arkwright	The Curragh Racecourse	Racecourse Management
John Commins	Commins Financial Services	Financial Services & Overseas Property
Tim Dooley	Dooley Insurances	Financial Services
Olivia McCarthy	White Water Shopping Centre	Property Development Ltd
Colette McGrath	The Office Centre	Office Supplies
Fiona McLoughlin	Privateseller.ie	Online service selling homes privately
Con McNamara	Department of Defence	Defence Forces
Michael Mullally	Consultant	Consultancy
Jane Mullins	Kildare Post	Newspaper
Brid Nolan	Falcondale Properties Ltd.	Property Management
Linda O'Neill	Creative Performance Ltd	Motivation & Training
David Wright	Horse Racing Ireland	Horse Racing Authority

If you wish to contact any of the above committee members, please contact the **Chamber Office at 438296** or email [office@newbridgechamber.ie](mailto:office@newbridgechamber.ie).

## Skillnets

South Dublin and Kildare (SD&K) Skillnets was formally launched on 15th May last at the **Ryan Academy for Entrepreneurship in Citywest**. An Tánaiste and Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney T.D. did the honours.

The SD&K Skillnets is funded by member companies from the South Dublin and Kildare areas and the Training Networks Programme, an initiative of Skillnets Ltd., which is funded from the National Training Fund through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

This is a training network of like minded companies which formed to design and deliver customised quality training and development programmes to businesses in the South Dublin and Kildare regions at reduced cost.

Tony Buckley, Network Manager of the new initiative explained "Now that we have our support structure in place, the number of programmes organised will increase considerably. Our initial focus **with Newbridge Chamber will be to commence bespoke courses with the Equine industry at the Racing Academy and Centre for Education (RACE) in Kildare Town**. We would expect to be in a position during 2007 to apply for further funding for the 2008/09 round of Skillnets funding."

If you want to find out more about Skillnets please contact our expert Linda O'Neill via the Chamber Office at 438296 or email [office@newbridgechamber.ie](mailto:office@newbridgechamber.ie) and we will get you moving in the right direction.



Neil Murphy, President, South Dublin Chamber, Tánaiste Mary Harney and Deirdre Coghlan-Murray, President, Newbridge Chamber.

## Meet New Members

We extend a welcome to recent new members:

NAME	COMPANY	BUSINESS TYPE
Ms. Sasha Kerins	Campbell & Co.	Chartered Accountants
Mr. Con McNamara	Department of Defence	Defence Forces
Mr. Barry Fitzsimons	Fitzsimons Life & Pensions	Financial Services
Mr. Paul Rafter	Hibernia Computer Services	IT Systems and Services Provider
Mr. Barry McCormack	McCormack Solicitors	Solicitors
Mr. Michael Mullally	Michael Mullally Consultant	Consultancy
Mr. John Buckley	Momentum Business Coaching	Small Business & Executive Coaching
Mr. Ivor Hegarty	Premier Hygiene Products	Hygiene Products for Washrooms and Kitchens
Mr. Peter Donnelly	The Wine Buff	Wine Retailer

## Committee Close-up

Meet **Evan Arkwright**, Commercial Manager of **The Curragh Racecourse**.

A new member of the Newbridge Chamber committee, Evan is lending his vast expertise to the Chamber Communications group as well as having general input on all matters.



Originally from Delgany, Co. Wicklow, Evan now lives between Milltown and Rathangan, near to the Hill of Allen.

Evan's career to date reads like a 'who's who' of racing; with time spent in Kentucky, Newmarket, Kildangan and Dubai. Along the way he supplemented his original business degree with a Race Track Industry qualification in Arizona. He has worked on the stallion/breeding end of the business and in the PR/media arena. More recently he worked with Weatherby's in Naas, which led him to his current role at The Curragh, where he has the onerous task of gathering revenue for the race course via race sponsorships etc. The big task ahead of all at The Curragh currently is the exciting prospect of the new expanded facilities and Evan will no doubt be figuring out how to maximise the potential offered by such development. More immediately, he is working on such significant events as the Budweiser Irish Derby Festival and Ryder Cup Race Day on 19th September (part of the official Ryder Cup events programme).

For relaxation Evan likes to chill out with his wife Eilish and their three young children Lucy, Harry and Sam. We are lucky that this very busy man gives generously of his time to the Chamber. Expertise and experience on this scale are rare!

## Carlow Chamber wins top spot

Congrats to our neighbour **Carlow Chamber** which recently won the 2005/2006 Eircom Chamber of the Year award. We send our best wishes to Carlow CEO Jacqui McNabb and her team on this great achievement.